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Sen. Allen and authors of ‘Lost in the Woods’ join forces to celebrate ‘March is Reading Month’

LANSING – Elementary schools across the state will be receiving an addition to their libraries, thanks to a “March is Reading Month” initiative announced today by Sen. Jason Allen and wildlife photographers Carl R. Sams II and Jean Stoick.

“Reading is the key to success in school and life,” said Allen, R-Traverse City. “We need to teach our children early in life that in addition to being fun, reading is the key to open any door. It’s important for adults to take time out of their busy schedules and read to children.”

Through a cooperative effort, more than 3,000 copies of Sams’ and Stoick’s *New York Times* bestselling children’s book *Lost in the Woods* will be distributed to elementary schools all across Michigan.

“One of our goals with this most recent book was to make sure that every Michigan elementary school received a copy,” Sams said. “Thanks to Senator Allen and his colleagues, we’ve found a way to make sure that gets accomplished.”

The couple’s newest book, *Lost in the Woods* is the story of a newborn fawn whom the animals believe is lost in the forest. Eventually, the animals discover the fawn is not lost, but alone because his mother instinctively knows she can only stay with him long enough to nurse and care for him. While the mother’s scent will attract predators, fawns are born scentless for their own protection.

Sams and Stoick are also the authors of *Stranger in the Woods*, which has been on the *New York Times* bestseller list for five consecutive years, hit the number one spot on the list in December of 2002, and has won several awards.

The husband and wife team, both Michigan natives, have been photographing wildlife together for more than 20 years. Their work has appeared in national and international publications such as *National Geographic*, *Audubon*, *BBC Wildlife* of Great Britain, *National Wildlife* and *Birder’s World*.

(More)

“Thanks to the generosity of Carl and Jean, every child in a Michigan elementary school will have an opportunity to enjoy this beautiful book,” Allen said. “We’re fortunate to have such talented authors call Michigan their home.”

Every year, school children throughout Michigan celebrate “March is Reading Month.” The purpose is to highlight reading as a fun activity that children and parents can do together, while promoting literacy.

As the nation continues to move towards an information based economy, literacy becomes increasingly important. According to the U.S. Department of Education, approximately 40 percent of students across the nation cannot read at a basic level.

In addition to distributing books to schools across the state, Allen will read to students in elementary schools throughout the 37th Senate District on Fridays throughout the month of March to promote “March is Reading Month.”

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Editor’s note: Broadcast quality video (uncompressed Quicktime movie file) of Allen’s comments will be available for download from the Senate Majority Communications Audiowire, web site cited below.

Allen’s audio remarks will also be available for download from the Audiowire web site at: www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/audiowire/allen/index.htm.